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A state proposal to merge two regional planning agencies has raised concerns among some suburban officials who believe the configuration would give Chicago and Cook County more influence over the disbursement of transportation dollars at the expense of the suburbs.

The plan, which would consolidate the Chicago Area Transportation Study and Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission under a new policy board, will be discussed at a regional transportation task force meeting Friday. The idea is to better coordinate transportation and land-use planning and make it more efficient, Illinois Department of Transportation officials said.

But several suburban officials are concerned IDOT may be trying to fix something that "is not necessarily broken," said Batavia Mayor Jeffery Schielke.

In the process, it could upset the balance between the city and suburbs, lessening the influence outlying municipalities have over the use of millions of transportation dollars.

In addition, several said the two-page plan has not been researched enough for task force members to make an informed vote.

"A lot more has to go into it before any kind of decision could be made," said New Lenox Mayor Mike Smith, a task force member and president of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission's executive committee, who received the proposal Wednesday.

Daniel Stefanski, IDOT's deputy director of public transportation, said the task force will not be asked to vote on the plan Friday. In addition, if it ultimately approves the plan, the state legislature still would have to vote on it, allowing time for public debate, he said.

The proposal comes a little more than a month after the task force, which was formed to find solutions to worsening gridlock and sprawl, rejected a plan that would have merged the area's mass transit agencies, CATS, NIPC and the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority into one "super agency."

Under the new plan, CATS and NIPC would fall under a 13-member authority known as the Regional Policy Board. The governor, Chicago's mayor and the metropolitan mayors' caucus each would appoint three board members. The Cook County Board president would choose one and the chairmen of the other five county boards would select two. The final member would be picked by a newly created Citizens Advisory Committee, which would advise the board on various issues.

That configuration worries people like DuPage County Board Chairman Robert Schillerstrom.

"He's absolutely concerned that the counties get appropriate representation," said Maureen McHugh, a Schillerstrom spokeswoman.

U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), a task force member, backs the merger but thinks the regional board should reflect population trends. Under his plan, six members would come from the suburbs and one would come from the city.

Stefanski of IDOT defended the proposal, saying it is not designed to eliminate anyone's voice.

"We are not going out there to shut anybody out of the process," he said. "We think this is more efficient."

Others questioned whether the merger is even necessary.

"Creating more oversight boards doesn't necessarily mean you are going to create more efficiencies," said John Noel, chairman of DuPage County's Transportation Committee. "There's probably an argument that more cooks spoil the broth rather than correct it."